Statement by the High Representative Catherine Ashton at the UN High Level Symposium on International Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission, issued the following statement today:

"Let me start today by extending my heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of the victims of terrorism all over the world.

I want to set out six directions in which the EU and the world should move in tackling terrorism:

First, security is always closely linked to democracy and functioning institutions. Governance, the rule of law and a functioning criminal justice system are crucial. We addressed this vital link in our strategies for the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. Today's discussions have also made this clear.

Second, we need to be able to integrate our internal and external policies into truly comprehensive counter-terrorism strategies. Too often, we still keep the two apart.

Third, we need to look beyond governments and involve also parliaments, civil society, social networks, journalists, women's groups and youth organisations. The EU is starting in Yemen, Pakistan. We fight terrorism best by building strong societies.

Fourth, we must ensure better national and regional ownership. The Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (to be launched this Thursday) will no doubt serve as a good platform to promote such ownership.
Fifth, we should promote regional law enforcement and judicial cooperation. Here, the EU has experience to share.

Sixth, we need to focus more on prevention of terrorism by examining and addressing conditions conducive to its spread, by raising awareness, and by working with media and education programmes.

Next year’s review of the Global UN Strategy offers us an excellent opportunity to take this work forward, and to maintain the momentum that has driven our co-operation forward over the last ten years.

We look forward very much to playing our part in seeing that strategy into the future.

Thank you."